

MICROCHERA PARVIROSTRIS.

Purple Snowcap.

Panychlora parvirostris, Lawr. Proc. Acad. Phil. 1865, p. 39.

Microchera parvirostris, Salvin, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1867, p. 154.—Lawr. Ann. of the Lyceum of Nat. Hist. of New York, 1870, p. 122.—Elliot, Synopsis, 1879, p. 104.—Muls. Hist. Nat. Oiseaux-Mouches, vol. iii. p. 137.

In this new Snowcap the silky white covering of the crown is wider, longer, and seems to stand out further over the crown, overshadowing the eyes; all the upper surface, from the occiput to the upper tail-coverts, is reddish purple; this colour extends over the shoulders and the chest down to the lower part of the belly; but here the purple is not quite so brilliant. There are light-grey hairy feathers under the tail of my birds, which appear to drop on the slightest touch; the bill is straight and elegantly formed; wings very long and curved, primaries purplish brown. The throat- and ear-coverts consist of small scaled feathers of a greenish colour, which stand out conspicuously from the rest.

The following description is from the pen of Mr. Lawrence; and it gives me great pleasure to repeat it in my letterpress. Mr. Lawrence states:—"My name for this species was proposed for the female; the male (since received) is very beautiful, of which I add the following description:—Front and crown pure white; lores black; the rest of the plumage above and below is of an exceedingly rich purplish crimson; upper tail-coverts coppery red; the four central tail-feathers are coppery bronze; the others are of a whitish grey for about half their length, gradually becoming purplish black, the extreme ends white; wings brownish purple; bill and feet black.

"Total length of male 3 inches, wing $1\frac{5}{8}$, tail $\frac{7}{8}$, bill $\frac{7}{16}$.

"Remarks.—Although resembling *M. albocoronata* in its white crown, this species is quite different in colouring. In *M. albocoronata* the plumage is black, washed with carmine, in some lights appearing to be entirely black. In *M. parvirostris* the plumage is clear and uniform in colour, not appearing black in any position. The tail is rounded; and the black colouring at the end is quite different from that of *M. albocoronata*, in which the tail is even, and it has a strongly defined subterminal black band."

In the Plate there are three males and one female; the latter I will now attempt to describe. The bill is rather curved and longer than the head; crown, underpart of the neck, shoulders, back, and upper tail-coverts bronzy green; the tail-feathers are short, the middle ones uniform and bronzy in colour, the three outer bluish grey; the same colour runs on the triangular tips of each of the lateral feathers; the throat and all the under surface is light grey; feet small, with greyish feathers about halfway down the tarsus.

Female. Total length $2\frac{3}{4}$, wing $1\frac{1}{2}$, tail $\frac{3}{4}$, bill $\frac{5}{8}$.